

Message Text

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51

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-07 NSC-07 SP-03 SS-20 RSC-01 CIAE-00

INR-11 NSAE-00 L-03 SAJ-01 ACDA-19 DRC-01 /099 W

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R 061014Z SEP 74

FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO DIVENGR MED LEGHORN

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 6738

SECDEF WASHDC

NAVFACENGCOMCONTR MADRID

CINCUSNAVEUR LONDON

COMLANTNAVFACENGCOM NORFLOK

DA (COE) WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 12208

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MMOL, PFOR, ELAB, IT

SUBJECT: FY 73 MCON PROGRAM, NAF SIGONELLA

REF: DIVENGR MED 300934Z AUG 74 (NOTAL)

1. WHILE EMBASSY ONLY INFO ADDRESSEE WE HAVE REVIEWED
REFERENCE MESSAGE AND WISH TO BRING TO ATTENTION OF ALL CONCERNED
THE FOLLOWING POINTS WHICH ARE CONSIDERED TO BE PERTINENT TO
THIS MATTER.

A. CONCUR WITH PROPOSAL OF DIVENGR TO REPROGRAM
PROJECTS PRESENTLY UNDER CONSTRUCTION SINCE, AS POINTED OUT IN
REF MESSAGE, IT WOULD BE AN OVERALL SAVINGS TO THE USG ON A
LONG TERM BASIS. IT IS UNDERSTOOD CONSTRUCTION COSTS HAVE
ESCALATED IN THE PAST QUARTER BY APPROXIMATELY 6 PCT PER MONTH,
AND THERE IS NO INDICATION AT THIS TIME THAT THIS TREND WILL BE
REVERSED IN THE NEAR FUTURE.

B. OF PARTICULAR CONCERN TO THE DIPLOMATIC MISSION
IS THAT DURING THIS PERIOD OF HEIGHTENED LABOR TENSION SOME
400 DIRECT EMPLOYED AND 50 INDIRECT EMPLOYED PERSONNEL WOULD
PROBABLY LOSE THEIR JOBS IF THE PROJECTS UNDER CONSIDERATION WERE
TERMINATED. THE LABOR PROBLEM IN ITALY IS EXTREMELY SENSITIVE
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AT THIS TIME, AND IF POSSIBLE THE U.S. FORCES SHOULD AVOID

BEING INVOLVED IN ANY LABOR MATTERS WHICH COULD EASILY CREATE ADVERSE NATIONAL PRESS COVERAGE. AS A MATTER OF INTEREST, RECENTLY, IN A SMALL TOWN NEAR NAPLES, WHERE 71 PERSONS HAD BEEN DESIGNATED TO BE DISMISSED BY A LOCAL FIRM, FACTORY WORKERS, FRIENDS AND FAMILY IN PROTEST BLOCKED TRAINS FROM PASSING THROUGH THE LOCAL RAILROAD STATION FOR FOUR DAYS. THIS RECEIVED BROAD COVERAGE THROUGH THE COUNTRY.

2. ROLE OF US AND NATO MILITARY FACILITIES IN ITALY HAS BEEN CONTROVERSIAL POLITICAL PUBLIC ISSUE EVER SINCE CYPRUS CRISIS HEATED UP. A UNILATERAL ABROGATION OF CONTRACTS WITH RESULTANT UNEMPLOYMENT AND NOTORIETY SHOULD BE AVOIDED IF AT ALL POSSIBLE.

3. THEREFORE, WHILE IT IS DIFFICULT TO CONJECTURE WHAT EARLY TERMINATION OF CONTRACTS AT SIGONELLA COULD GENERATE, IN THIS PARTICULAR CASE WHERE IT APPEARS TO ALSO BE IN THE BEST OVERALL ECONOMIC INTEREST OF THE USG TO REPROGRAM THESE CONTRACTS, IT WOULD BE ESPECIALLY WISE TO AVOID THE POSSIBILITY OF THE U.S. FORCES BEING DIRECTLY INVOLVED IN A LABOR STRIKE SITUATION AT THIS TIME.VOLPE

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